Hazara and Afghania (Not Pakhtun or Pakhtunkhwa) — A Journey of Twenty-Five Hundred Years

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1700 BC: In the sacred Hindu text, the Rigveda, the region beyond the Sapta Sindhu (Land of Seven Rivers) was referred to as “Pakthas,” not by the later term “Pakhtunkhwa.”

334 BC: Herodotus, the father of history, referred to the inhabitants of this region as “Pactyans” in his writings.

325 BC: When Alexander the Great conquered Purushapura, its capital Udabhandapura (present-day Swabi), and the fortress of Aornos, the region of Hazara already existed. A local Kshatriya chief, “Sisicottus,” was appointed governor of the region.

127 AD: During the reign of Kanishka, the great emperor of the Kushan Empire, this region was formally recorded as “Purushapura” (present-day Peshawar). The territories extending from Purushapura to the Hydaspes were part of the region historically associated with Hazara.

631 AD: The renowned Chinese traveler Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang) visited the region and recorded its name as “Po-lu-sha-pu-lu.” He also reported a Kshatriya ruler in power at Kapisa.

982 AD: The celebrated Persian geographical work Hudud al-Alam was written, in which the Afghan tribe is said to be mentioned among the earliest known references, in connection with the mountain village of Saul.

1001 AD: When Mahmud of Ghazni conquered Purushapura, the ruler of the region at that time was the Kshatriya Raja Jayapala. His kingdom included Suvastu, Pushkalavati, Varadana, Udabhandapura, Potohar, the Hydaspes, and Hazara. His successor was Raja Anandapala. The ruler of Suvastu was the Kshatriya Raja Gira.

1333 AD: The famous traveler Ibn Battuta journeyed through this region and, in his travelogue, referred to the wider territory as “Afghania.”

1529 AD: The Mughal emperor Zahiruddin Babur completed his autobiography, the Baburnama, in which he used the term “Afghania” for this region.

1933 AD: Chaudhry Rahmat Ali published his historic pamphlet Now or Never. In coining the name “PAKISTAN,” the letter “A” represented “Afghania” (the region corresponding broadly to present-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), alongside Punjab.

20th Century: The term “Pakhtunkhwa” emerged as a political and administrative designation and was later formally adopted as the official name of the province through the 18th Constitutional Amendment in 2010.

Pashtuns, Aryans, and Y-DNA Haplogroup R1a-Z93: In 2018, Dr. Inamullah Yousafzai, formerly associated with the Genetics Department at Hazara University, Mansehra, and presently serving as an Assistant Professor in the Forensic Department at the University of the Punjab, Lahore, conducted genetic research involving dental morphology and

haplotypic analysis of five major tribes from the Swat and Dir districts. His research identified the Pashtuns as having an Aryan ancestry.

Dr. Inamullah Yousafzai linked the origin of the Aryans to the Caucasus, Greece, and Armenia, while other historians have proposed origins in Mesopotamia, the Fertile Crescent, and the Arctic region.

The Y-DNA haplogroup most commonly associated with Indo-Iranian populations, including many groups historically described as Aryan, is R1a-Z93.